

Mason Rogers lived in the small town of Alabaster with Great Aunt Polly and his cousin Douglass. Mason's parents had been killed in an unfortunate accident in which their ship had capsized on a vacation and they had perished with the rest of the passengers on board. Mason had been sent to live with Great Aunt Polly, an elderly woman who was strict and cranky but who loved Mason very much.

Mason's cousin Douglass, who also lived with Aunt Polly, was a tattletale and a crybaby. Mason wanted nothing to do with him. Mason liked to play with a friend named Charlie, and they played trick on Douglass as often as they could. Aunt Polly got mad whenever Mason played tricks on Douglass, and she would punish Mason by making him do chores.

One morning, after Mason had been extremely unkind to Douglass, Aunt Polly ordered Mason to whitewash the picket fence that bordered the house. Mason picked up the bucket of white paint and went to work on the fence. The southern town was hot during the summer and Mason longed to take a break and fix a cold drink, but he knew Aunt Polly would not allow it.

About that time, Douglass walked up to the fence in his freshly starched pants suit. "Hello, Mason, are you having fun out here in the

hot sun?" he drawled with a sneer. Mason ignored him and continued to whitewash the fence while Douglass stood there drinking a cool glass of lemonade. "I think this is perhaps the best glass of lemonade Aunt Polly has ever made. Too bad for you that you misbehaved and cannot enjoy some," said Douglass. Mason looked up and said, "Why don't you go and play dolls with the judge's daughters down the street because you sure look like a girl in that suit!"

Douglass turned red and kicked the fence where Mason had been painting. He left several marks in the paint and Mason was furious because he would have to paint the fence again! Just as Mason was about to chase his cousin, Douglass kicked the fence where a bucket of paint was resting and it splashed all over his new suit. "Aunt Polly, Mason poured paint all over my new suit!" he wailed. "He most certainly did not, young man. I saw what you just did and you deserve what just happened to you, so quit yelling and get inside the house," said Aunt Polly. Out on the sidewalk Mason laughed.

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